



2003 Civil Works Conference

US Army Corps of Engineers
South Atlantic Division

Links: Find out about Charleston!

Classic Southern Charm

In the closing pages of *Gone With the Wind*, Rhett tells Scarlett that he's going back home to Charleston, where he can find "the calm dignity life can have when it's lived by gentle folks, the genial grace of days that are gone.

When I lived those days, I didn't realize the slow charm of them." In spite of all the changes and upheavals over the years, Rhett's endorsement of Charleston still holds true.

If the Old South lives all through South Carolina's Low Country, it positively thrives in Charleston. All our romantic notions of antebellum days--stately homes, courtly manners, gracious hospitality, and above all, gentle dignity--are facts of everyday life in this old city, in spite of a few scoundrels here and there, including an impressive roster of pirates, patriots, and presidents.

Notwithstanding a history dotted with earthquakes, hurricanes, fires, and Yankee bombardments, Charleston remains one of the best-preserved cities in America's Old South. It boasts 73 pre-Revolutionary War buildings, 136 from the late 18th century, and more than 600 built before the 1840s. With its cobblestone streets and horse-drawn carriages, Charleston is a place of visual images and sensory pleasures. Jasmine and wisteria fragrances fill the air; the aroma of she-crab soup (a local favorite) wafts from sidewalk cafes; and antebellum architecture graces the historic cityscape. "No wonder they are so full of themselves," said an envious visitor from Columbia, which may be the state capital but doesn't have Charleston's style and grace.

In its annual reader survey, Condé Nast Traveler magazine named Charleston the No. 3 city to visit in America, which places it ahead of such perennial favorites as New York, Seattle, and Santa Fe. Visitors are drawn here from all over the world, and it is now quite common to hear German and French spoken on local streets.

Does this city have a modern side? Yes, but it's well hidden. Chic shops abound, as do a few supermodern hotels, but Charleston has no skyscrapers. You don't come to Charleston for anything cutting-edge, though. You come to glimpse an earlier, almost-forgotten era.

Many local families still own and live in the homes that their planter ancestors built.

Charlestonians manage to maintain a way of life that in many respects has little to do with wealth. The simplest encounter with Charleston natives seems to be invested with a social air, as though the visitor were a valued guest. Yet there are those who detect a certain snobbishness in Charleston--and truth be told, you'd have to stay a few hundred years to be considered an insider here.

Source: Frommer's® The Carolinas and Georgia, 6th Edition

Interesting Charleston Links!

[Magnolia Gardens](#)

Step back 325 years as you visit Charleston, South Carolina's premier tourist attraction and plantation, founded 1676. As the South's Complete Plantation Experience, noted by travel writer, Charles Kuralt, as his "...greatest Charleston pleasure,"

[Friends of the Hunley](#)

On the night of February 17, 1864, the H.L. Hunley embarked on a dangerous mission that would forever mark her place in history. Eight men, led by Lt. George Dixon, entered an experimental vessel that was to become the first successful submarine in world history, with a mission to sink an enemy ship, the USS Housatonic. That night, the Hunley rammed her spar

torpedo into the hull of the Housatonic. She then surfaced long enough for her crew to signal their comrades on the shore of Sullivan's Island with a blue magnesium light,(or lantern) indicating a successful mission. The shore crew stoked their signal fires and anxiously awaited the Hunley's safe return. But minutes after her historic achievement, the Hunley and all hands onboard vanished into the sea without a trace.

[back to TOP](#)

South Carolina Aquarium

Visitors to the South Carolina Aquarium can explore Southern aquatic life in an attraction filled with thousands of enchanting creatures and plants in amazing habitats, from five major regions of the Appalachian Watershed. Jutting out into the Charleston Harbor for 2,000 feet, the focal point at this brand-new attraction, which opened in 2000, is a 93,000-square-foot aquarium featuring a two-story Great Ocean Tank Exhibition. Contained within are some 800 animals, including deadly sharks but also sea turtles and stingrays. Every afternoon at 4pm the aquarium offers a dolphin program, where bottle-nosed dolphins can be viewed from an open-air terrace. One of the most offbeat exhibits replicates a blackwater swamp, with atmospheric fog, a spongy floor, and twinkling lights.

[back to TOP](#)

Cypress Gardens

Cypress Gardens is located approximately 24 miles north of Charleston, SC, USA. The Gardens, known as the Gem of Berkeley County, offers visitors the rare experience of being one with nature as they explore the swamp on flat bottom boats, or by walking on a variety of nature trails. Visitors are surprised and amazed at the beauty and serenity of the cypress swamp.

[back to TOP](#)

Charleston Museum

The Charleston Museum, America's First Museum, was founded in 1773. Its mission is to preserve and interpret the cultural and natural history of Charleston and the South Carolina Lowcountry. We invite you to explore this rich, varied history at the Museum and its two National Historic Landmark houses. All are located downtown, in America's Most Historic City.

[back to TOP](#)

Ft. Sumter National Monument

The first engagement of the Civil War took place at Fort Sumter on April 12 and 13, 1861. After 34 hours of fighting, the Union surrendered the fort to the Confederates. From 1863 to 1865, the Confederates at Fort Sumter withstood a 22 month siege by Union forces. During this time, most of the fort was reduced to brick rubble. Fort Sumter became a national monument in 1948.

[back to TOP](#)

Boone Hall Plantation

The first in a series of land grants that became Boone Hall Plantation was awarded in 1681. Here slaves raised cotton while Major John Boone fought for the privileges and equality sought by the settlers. Successive owners followed his example, using the land to support their individual lifestyles. Your tour of Boone Hall will span the centuries and tell the stories of the planters and African Americans who lived and worked here.

Middleton Place (Plantation)

Middleton Place is a National Historic Landmark and a carefully preserved 18th-century plantation that has survived revolution, Civil War, and earthquake. It was the home of four important generations of Middletons, beginning with Henry Middleton, President of the First Continental Congress; Arthur, a signer of the Declaration of Independence; Henry, Governor of South Carolina and an American Minister to Russia; and Williams, a signer of the Ordinance of Secession.

[back to TOP](#)

The Old Exchange and Provost Dungeon

Considered to be one of the three most historically significant Colonial buildings in the United States, the Old Exchange Building is a "must see" when visiting Charleston.

[back to TOP](#)

The City of Folly Beach

Folly Beach is a barrier island, six miles long and the closest beach to historical Charleston, South Carolina, 15 minutes via the Connector. Folly Beach is the home of sea, sand, and surfing, historical and cultural sites; a maritime forest; Morris Island Lighthouse; gourmet food, endangered species of birds; and southern hospitality. Folly Beach is a "must see - must visit" place.

[back to TOP](#)

Patriots Point

Located on historic Charleston Harbor, Patriots Point is home to USS YORKTOWN the Fighting Lady. The first USS YORKTOWN (CV-5) sank at the battle of Midway on June 7, 1942.

Onboard the decks of this famous World War II aircraft carrier, you can relive a momentous time in America's history. The Fighting Lady contains all the evidence of her past; one can see, touch, feel and smell the past, where young Americans fought and died to turn the fortunes of war in the Pacific.

[back to TOP](#)